

**Listing of All Claims Including Current Amendments**

1. (currently amended) An optical instrument, comprising:
  - a shaft having a distal end;
  - an interchangeable head detachably connected to said distal end of said shaft at a coupling point;
  - a first transmission system for transmission of illuminating power in a distal direction, said first transmission system being arranged partially in said shaft and partially in said interchangeable head and passing through said coupling point;
  - a second transmission system for transmission of image information in a proximal direction, said second transmission system being arranged partially in said shaft and partially in said interchangeable head and passing through said coupling point;
  - at least one of said interchangeable head and said coupling point being designed in such a way that upon loosening of said interchangeable head image information of perceptively modified quality is transmitted by said second transmission system;[[.]]
  - wherein said second transmission system has imaging optics, said imaging optics being arranged partially in said interchangeable head and partially in said shaft, a part of said imaging optics arranged in said shaft is exchangeable in said shaft.

2-5. (cancelled)

6. (original) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said first transmission system comprises an optical waveguide that extends through said shaft and through said interchangeable head, and is interrupted at said coupling point, and wherein said distal end

of said shaft and said interchangeable head each have a flat polished surface at said coupling point.

7. (cancelled)

8. (cancelled)

9. (original) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said interchangeable head is connected to said distal end of said shaft at said coupling point by means of at least one positioning pin that engages in a corresponding bore.

10. (original) The instrument of claim 9, wherein said at least one positioning pin is provided on said interchangeable head, and said bore is provided on said distal end of said shaft.

11. (original) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said interchangeable head is connected to said distal end of said shaft at said coupling point by means of at least one positioning pin that engages in a corresponding bore, and wherein said at least one positioning pin is exchangeable.

12. (original) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said interchangeable head is connected to said distal end of said shaft at said coupling point by means of at least one positioning pin that engages in a corresponding bore, and wherein said at least one positioning pin serves the purpose of transmitting electric signals or electric power.

13. (original) The instrument of claim 1, wherein there is arranged between said interchangeable head and said distal end of said shaft an elastic element that upon loos-

ening of said interchangeable head distances said interchangeable head from said distal end of said shaft.

14. (currently amended) The instrument of claim 13, wherein said interchangeable head is connected to said distal end of said shaft at said coupling point by means of at least one positioning pin that engages in a corresponding bore, and wherein said distancing is limited to less than a length of said at least one positioning pin.

15. (original) The instrument of claim 1, wherein at least one operating element is arranged in said interchangeable head.

16. (original) The instrument of claim 15, wherein said at least one operating element can be connected to said distal end of said shaft by means of a plug.

17-27 (cancelled)

28. (new) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said part of said imaging optics arranged in said shaft comprise a first imaging part that is exchangeable with a second imaging part; wherein said first imaging part corresponds to a first interchangeable head and said second imaging part corresponds to a second interchangeable head.

29. (new) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said part of said imaging optics arranged in said shaft comprise a first imaging part that is exchangeable with a second imaging part and said first imaging part differs from said second imaging part with respect to an optical property.

**In the Specification**

Please amend the abstract as detailed below:

**Abstract**

An optical instrument, in particular an endoscope, has a shaft and an interchangeable head. The interchangeable head is detachably connected to the distal end of the shaft at a coupling point. The instrument also has a first transmission system for distal transmission of illuminating power, and a second transmission system for proximal transmission of image information, the first transmission system and the second transmission system passing through the coupling point. The interchangeable head and/or the coupling point are/is designed in such a way that upon loosening of the interchangeable head image information of perceptively modified quality is transmitted by the second transmission system.

~~The interchangeable head and/or the coupling point are/is designed in such a way that upon loosening of the interchangeable head image information of perceptively modified quality is transmitted by the second transmission system.~~

~~— Furthermore, a description is given of an optical instrument, in particular an endoscope, having a shaft and having an interchangeable head that is detachably connected to the distal end of the shaft at a coupling point, and having, furthermore, a first transmission system for distal transmission of illuminating power and having a second transmission system for proximal transmission of image information, the first transmission system and the second transmission system passing through the coupling point, wherein the second transmission system has at least one image pick-up that is arranged in the interchangeable head, and an electric signal line that leads from the image pick-up through the coupling point in the proximal direction.~~